

United States District Court

for the
Western District of New York

United States of America

v.

Case No. 25-MJ- 581

GIOVANNI SERRANO,

Defendant

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief. On or about May 22, 2025, in the Western District of New York, and elsewhere the defendant violated:

Code Section

21 U.S.C §§ 841(a)(1) and 841(b)(1)(C)

18 U.S.C. §§ 924(c)(1)(A)(i)

Offense Description

Possession with Intent to Distribute a mixture and substance containing N-phenyl-N-[1-(2-phenylethyl)-4-piperidiny] propanamide (fentanyl), a Schedule II controlled substance.

Possession of a Firearm in Furtherance of a Drug Trafficking Crime.

This Criminal Complaint is based on these facts:


See attached affidavit.

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

Sworn to before me on:

Date: May 22, 2025

City and State: Rochester, New York


Special Agent Sabatino Smith
Drug Enforcement Administration


MARK W. PEDERSEN
United States Magistrate Judge

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

25-MJ- 581

GIOVANNI SERRANO,

Defendant

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

SABATINO SMITH, being duly sworn, deposes and states:

1. I am a Special Agent with the DEA. As such, I am a “federal law enforcement officer” within the meaning of Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure 41(a)(2)(C), that is, a government agent engaged in enforcing the criminal laws and duly authorized by the Attorney General to request search warrants and to make arrest for, offenses enumerated in Title 21, United States Code, Section 801, et seq.

2. This Affidavit is in support of a criminal complaint charging Giovanni SERRANO with violations of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1), and 841(b)(1)(C), possession with intent to distribute fentanyl, a Schedule II controlled substance, and Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c)(1)(A)(i), Possession of a Firearm in Furtherance of Drug Trafficking.

**TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE AND INVOLVEMENT
IN THIS INVESTIGATION**

3. I have been a DEA Special Agent since September 2009. Prior to becoming a Special Agent with the DEA, I was employed as a Special Agent and counter sniper with the United States Secret Service for eight years. In May of 2000, I received a Bachelor's of Science degree in Political Science from the State University of New York at Brockport.

4. During my employment with the DEA, I received (20) weeks of training in the methods used by drug trafficking and money laundering organizations. I have received training in the areas of drug identification, drug distribution methods, money laundering, financial investigations, and drug enforcement techniques. I am familiar with the methods of use, effects, distribution, appearance, as well as the methods of manufacture of controlled substances. I have experience in the investigation of violations of federal and state narcotics laws. I have conducted and participated in numerous narcotics investigations resulting in the arrest and conviction of drug distributors, and the seizure of quantities of controlled substances. During these investigations my participation has included, but has not been limited to undercover operations; direction of confidential sources; debriefing defendants and others involved in the distribution and consumption of illegal drugs; the execution of search warrants and the execution of arrest warrants. I have also been the affiant on multiple court-authorized Title III interceptions, search warrants, and criminal complaints and have been involved in numerous surveillance operations.

5. I have been one of the lead agents in this investigation since its inception. As a result of my personal participation in this investigation, analysis of documents and records obtained by investigative team, and other law enforcement officers, information provided by confidential informants, the basis of whose knowledge and reliability will be described below, information learned through analysis of pen registers and subpoenaed tolls and other records and on physical and surveillance of SERRANO, I am familiar with all aspects of this investigation. Since this affidavit is being submitted for limited purposes, I have not included every fact known to me concerning this investigation. Rather, I have set forth only the facts that I believe are necessary to establish the required foundation for the requested warrants and those facts that relate to the issue of whether probable cause exists to believe that the above-named defendant committed the above-mentioned offense.

GIOVANNI SERRANO

6. Giovanni SERRANO DOB XX/XX/1998 (hereinafter referred to as “Giovanni SERRANO”) resides at 1720 Portland Avenue, Rear Apartment, Rochester, New York and utilizes this residence to facilitate his narcotics trafficking. This investigation has revealed that Giovanni SERRANO is a member of his brother Carlos SERRANO’s¹ narcotics distribution organization. Giovanni SERRANO has the following criminal history;

**On April 2, 2018, Giovanni was convicted upon a plea of guilty to
Attempted Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree: Loaded**

¹ Carlos Serrano is currently charged with a violation of 21 USC 846 in Case No. 25-CR-6079-EAW, which was unsealed today.

Firearm, a felony, and sentenced to four years in prison out of Orleans County, NY.

Federal Search Warrant Executed at 1720 Portland Avenue, Rear Apartment

7. On May 19, 2025, agents obtained a federal search warrant for 1720 Portland Avenue, Rear Apartment, Rochester, New York (25-MJ-572-5) signed by the Honorable Mark W. Pedersen, United States Magistrate Judge. On May 22, 2025, agents executed the above warrant at Giovanni SERRANO's residence located at 1720 Portland Avenue, Rear Apartment, Giovanni SERRANO was present at 1720 Portland Avenue, Rear Apartment, at the time of the execution. Below is a summary of what was seized at this location;

a. Approximately 4.04 grams of fentanyl² located on the coffee table in the upstairs computer room. Located with the 4.04 grams of fentanyl was approximately 9.36 grams of cutting agent in a separate plastic bag³. Also, on the desk in the computer room was a wallet containing Giovanni SERRANO's driver's license.

b. A Ruger LCP II handgun chambered in .380 caliber (SN: 380591393) loaded with a magazine containing (6) .380 caliber rounds located inside a cardboard box under clothing in the downstairs closet⁴. There was no round in the chamber.

² Agents utilized a field test on this substance and it field-tested positive for the presence of fentanyl.

³ Based upon your affiant's training and experience, the presence of cutting agent next to that quantity of fentanyl is consistent with distribution activity.

⁴ Based upon my training and experience, I believe that the proximity of this firearm to the fentanyl and cutting agent that were recovered (all within SERRANO's apartment), along with my understanding based upon my training and experience that firearms are tools of the trade utilized by drug traffickers to protect their drugs and assets from rival drug dealers, there is probable cause to believe that the loaded firearm was possessed in furtherance of SERRANO's possession of controlled substances with the intent to distribute them.

CONCLUSION

8. WHEREFORE, based upon the foregoing, I respectfully submit that there is probable cause to believe that on or about May 22, 2025 in the Western District of New York, Giovanni SERRANO possessed with intent to distribute fentanyl, a Schedule II controlled substances, in violated Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1), and 841(b)(1)(C), and possessed a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime, in violation of with Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c)(1)(A)(i).



SABATINO SMITH
Special Agent
Drug Enforcement Administration

Sworn to before me this
22 day of May, 2025



HONORABLE MARK W. PEDERSEN
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE